

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6013

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 14084

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: NATO, EEC

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE MEETING OF SECRETARY WITH EUROPEAN
COMMUNITY FOREIGN MINISTERS DURING NATO
MINISTERIAL

REF: A) STATE 236018; B) USNATO 5838

1. IN COURSE OF CONVERSATION ON OTHER MATTERS WITH
BUTLER (HEAD, EUROPEAN INTEGRATION DEPARTMENT,
EXTERNAL, FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE) NOVEMBER 30,
HE ASKED IF WE KNEW SECRETARY'S WISHES WITH RESPECT
TO MEETING WITH EC DURING NATO MINISTERIAL. HE WENT
ON TO EXPLAIN HIS QUESTION BY SAYING THAT THERE HAD
BEEN SOME CONFUSION IN THE EC AS TO WHETHER THE US
HAD SUGGESTED SUCH A MEETING, OR WHETHER THE US MIGHT
HAVE ASSUMED THAT THE EC HAD SUGGESTED IT. BELIEVING
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THAT US EITHER HAD, OR WOULD SHORTLY, REQUEST SUCH

A MEETING, EC HAD, ON NOVEMBER 20, DECIDED AGAINST PROPOSING SUCH A MEETING THEMSELVES, BUT IN FAVOR OF ACCEPTING A US PROPOSAL. NOTING SUBSEQUENT CONFUSION AS TO WHO HAD TAKEN INITIATIVE, FCO HAD ASKED UK EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON TO CLARIFY US POSITION, AND HAD BEEN INFORMED THAT THE SECRETARY WAS WILLING TO MEET WITH THE NINE IF THEY WISHED, BUT WOULD NOT PROPOSE IT. UK HAD THEN TRIED TO SECURE AGREEMENT IN EC TO REQUEST SUCH MEETING. BUTLER WAS NOT CERTAIN, BUT DOUBTED THAT UK COULD SECURE A CHANGE IN EC POSITION. AS A RESULT, IT APPEARED, SAID BUTLER, THAT BOTH SIDES WILLING TO MEET, BUT ONLY IF OTHER PROPOSES IT.

2. BUTLER SAID FCO THOUGHT SUCH MEETING MIGHT BE USEFUL TO DISPELL SOME OF MISUNDERSTANDINGS OF PAST FEW MONTHS. HE NOTED DIFFICULTY OF FINDING TIME DURING MINISTERIAL AND SAID HE THOUGHT THAT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9, OFFERED ONLY POSSIBLE TIME. BUTLER SAID HE HAD DISCUSSED MATTER WITH SIR ALEC DOUGLAS-HOME WHO "SAW SOME DIFFICULTIES" AND WHO WOULD NOT WISH TO DISCUSS SUCH MATTERS AS DETAILS OF US/EC DECLARATION, BUT WHO THOUGHT MEETING WOULD BE GENERALLY HELPFUL. BUTLER ALSO NOTED THAT SUCH A MEETING COULD HELP TO DISPELL THE IMPRESSION CREATED AMONG THE SMALLER EC MEMBERS BY THE TOURS MEETING OF FINANCE MINISTERS THAT THE THREE LARGER EC MEMBERS WERE TAKING DECISIONS WITHOUT CONSULTING THEIR PARTNERS. IN THIS CONNECTION, HE HOPED THE QUADRIPARTITE DINNER ON THE 9TH COULD BE CLEARLY EXPLAINED AS RELATED SOLELY TO GERMAN PROBLEMS.
ANNENBERG

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